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SENT TO: Amembassy MOSCOW PRIORITY 1029

~~[illegible]~~ EMBTEL 1114.

Embassy may reply to MFA protest on Simferopol as follows: During course of surveillance of shipping in connection with recent Cuban events US Navy plane at approximately 2310 hours Greenwich time October 23 sighted merchant ship at 23° 36 north 62°22 west. Plane made several runs in vicinity of ship in order determine identification. During runs pilot used a number of magnesium photoflash cartridges, attempting to obtain necessary identification. These cartridges, on being ejected, make crackling noise somewhat similar to small arms fire and for this reason personnel of Simferopol may have concluded plane was firing its weapons. No weapons were fired at or near Simferopol.

END

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED by [signature] DATE 5/4/88
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Drafted by: EUR:SOV:JARamsey:erk 10/30/62

Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by: G - U. Alexis Johnson

Clearances:
SOV - Mr. Guthrie (in draft)
EUR - Mr. Davis (in draft)
Navy-OP-61B - Capt. Lyndon (in draft)
G - Mr. Johnson
G/PM - Mr. Kitchen (in draft)
S/S - Mr. [illegible]

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